General Motors Gets Into the Delivery Business With BrightDrop

Six years after General Motors introduced the first mass-market electric vehicle to CES audiences in 2015, the automaker has returned to the conference to double down on its green ambitions, promising to roll out 30 electric models by 2025.

That timeline has accelerated since the brand announced its electric mandate in 2017 (the previous goal was 20 EVs by 2023), and General Motors chairman and president Mary Barra gave a look at how the company is planning to get there during a keynote presentation at CES 2021 this morning.

Among the announcements was that GM will launch a logistics business, BrightDrop, manufacturing technology such as an electric pallet and a new electric van. Called the EV600, it will have a range of up to 250 miles on a full charge and will be on the road as soon as late 2021. Already, FedEx is lined up as BrightDrop's first customer.

"BrightDrop provides an ecosystem of smart connected products including electric vehicles and software-enabled services, offering commercial delivery companies a platform for sustainable growth," Barra said. "Our vision for the future is a world with zero crashes, zero emissions and zero congestion. The key to unlock that vision is electrification."

Ahead of the conference on Friday, the brand unveiled a revamped logo—just the fifth change in the brand's 113-year-history— and a campaign to push the electric effort titled

“Everybody In.”

Electric vehicles only account for about 3% of today’s global traffic, but the growing sector is gaining ground faster than investors have expected—in 2018, EV sales rose 80% in the U.S., largely driven by Tesla. General Motors hopes its scale, and time-tested brand portfolio, will help it take the lead.

Wahl candidly pointed out Tesla as a direct competitor, a brand that famously claims not to spend a dime in marketing.

“I think the market is evolving. Clearly, the big player is Tesla,” Wahl said. “Our message is that there should be an EV for everyone.”

GM will roll out its electric mandate across its entire portfolio of brands, which includes Cadillac, Chevrolet, Buick and GMC. However, the new logo won’t be featured alongside individual brands, ensuring that each will retain a “swim lane,” according to Wahl.

While it will have to spend more in advertising, GM has some advantages, namely its established brand and a loyal audience, in addition to an infrastructure of dealers.

“As you look at all of those together, it gives us significant advantages,” Wahl said. “But if you’re a company that’s changing, you have to communicate it.”

https://www.adweek.com/commerce/general-motors-delivery-business-brightdrop-electric-van/